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SPIRITUAL SONGS

FROM

The Canticles.





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The Canticles.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GUSTAV JAHN.

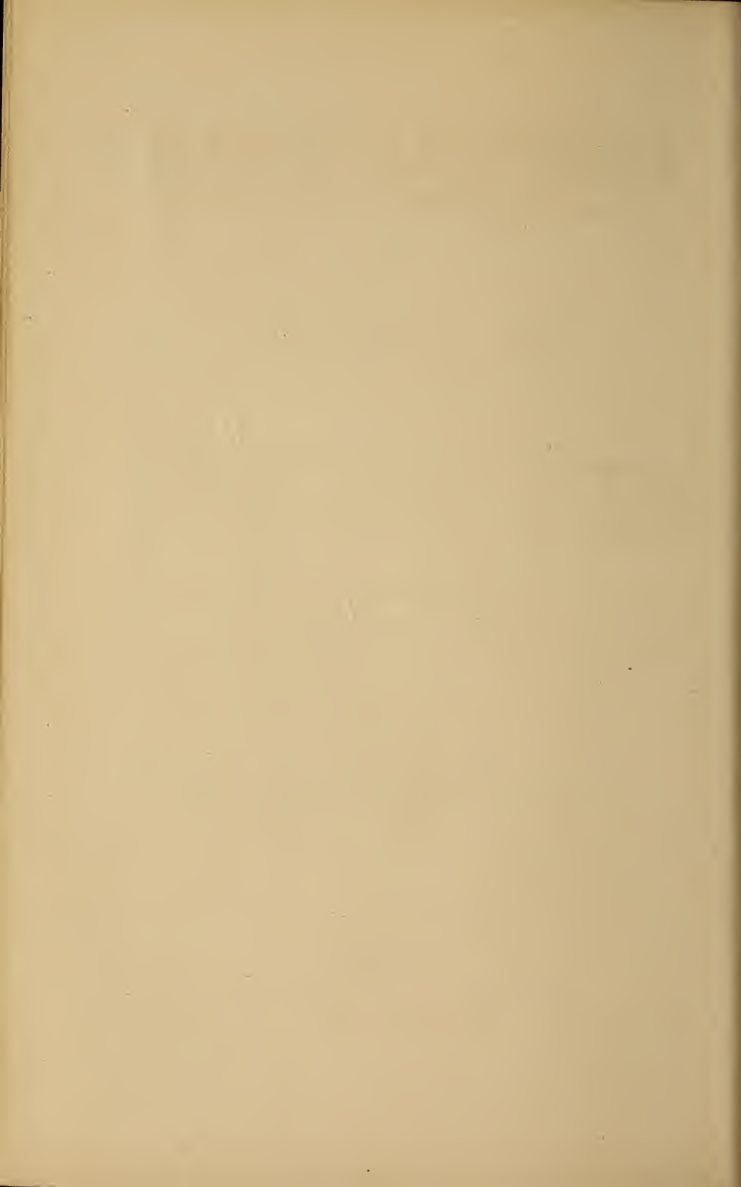
TRANSLATED BY

ANNA M. MAY.

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”

1 Cor. ii. 7.

LONDON :
MORGAN AND CHASE,
38, LUDGATE HILL.





TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN bringing these Hymns before the English public, it may be necessary to state, that in the original they form parts of one connected poem, embracing and systematizing every passage of the "Song of Solomon." In the quotations at the head of the different pieces, I have adhered throughout to the German version adopted by the author, literally rendered ; and as my aim has been to reproduce the spirit and essence, rather than the exact outward form of these "Spiritual Songs," I have occasionally sacrificed smoothness, and it may be symmetry, to free play of thought or force of expression.

Ever since (two or three years ago) I met with the original, it has been my fervent desire to share

with others the refreshment and edification which I had myself received from its pages. Especially have I longed that they might reach the homes of the sick and the sorrowful ; and should my wish be now fulfilled, should I be permitted to give but a cup of cold water to some worn and thirsty one, or to lend a helping hand to a fainting brother or sister, I shall indeed be richly repaid for the labour of this imperfect translation of a portion of Gustav Jahn's noble poem.

Tottenham, November, 1865.





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THE SONG OF SONGS.

—◆—
Chap. i. I.

“The Song of songs, which is Solomon’s.”

PRAISE to the Lord !
Blest soul, unfold thy pinions, upward soar,
With heart and voice the heaven of heavens
explore ;
His love thy theme, his mercy’s boundless store.

Bow Thyself, Lord !
Come, hover near, upon celestial wing ;
Descend, from heaven descend, O yearned-for
King !
Open thy mouth, the Song of Songs to sing.

THE YEARNING BRIDE.

Chap. i. 2-4.

"Let Him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is sweeter than wine. Let us smell thy good ointment: thy name is a poured-out ointment, therefore the virgins love Thee. Draw me after Thee; so will we run."



O Jesu's feet I took my way,
In contrite and repentant pain,
The tears flowed down in ceaseless rain;
Like Mary, there o'erwhelmed I lay.
Its load of guilt my soul opprest
Low in the dust would e'er bemoan;
'Twas then He drew me to his breast,
And called me his, Himself my own.

Oh, sweetest voice, most tender tone!
My Lord and God, save sorrow's tide,
And this poor life, I've nought beside,
And yet Thou callest me thine own.

Thy blessed bride in rapture steep,
Still closer fold her, precious Friend,
Till in enjoyment full and deep,
Her grief, her fear, her longing end.

More strengthening than cheering wine
To pilgrims when their strength decays,
More sweetly, thy caresses raise
The fainting heart that springs to thine.
The thought which every doubt can still,
Is ever, dearest Lord, the same ;
Whate'er thy Saviour-hands fulfil,
Is for the glory of thy name.

Thou wilt ! With joy thy word I own,
Thy bride should poor and wretched be,
That she might find her all in Thee :
My Lord and God, thy will be done !
To all henceforth would I declare
That I am worthless, low, and mean ;
And all my wealth is found herein,
That I thy glorious name may bear.

Thy Name is fraught with sweetest balm,
And solace gives the aching heart,
When to conviction's burning smart
Forgiveness yields her holy calm ;

And, as the costly balsam poured
By Mary on thy blessed feet,
Thy kingdom fills with fragrance sweet,
For all the chosen of the Lord.

Ah then, poor heart, arise and soar,
With all thy rapture fly to heaven ;
To me, O Heavenly Love, be given
Thy victor way with Thee to explore.
Sun of my soul ! too far Thou art ;
Oh, nearer, nearer I would be,
That eye to eye, and heart to heart,
Adoring I may gaze on Thee.



THE GRACIOUS GIVER.

Chap. i. 4.

"The King hath brought me into his chambers: we are glad and rejoice in Thee, we remember thy love more than wine; the upright love Thee."



AS it a dream, that Thou hast stooped to
me,

And that the Highest Majesty
Embraced a simple maid?

O Lord, from out my raptured heart,
For all the grace Thou didst impart,
My stammering thanks are paid.

Thy grace! it passes highest thought;
Down in my heart's recesses deep
The treasured bliss I silent keep,
With calm and holy musings fraught,
That all the joys thy gifts have brought,
Thy bridal gifts, my soul may reap.

I lay before Thee, filled with anxious yearning,
In lowly adoration bowed the knee :
Dear Lord, my Lord, how was it then with me ?
My fears, my woes, to joys unuttered turning,
A blessed bride, with timid rapture burning,
O Heavenly Bridegroom, I was led to Thee.

Nought between ! all distance disappearing,
Love my over-happy spirit bore
To the longed-for home on Canaan's shore,
Where, O Lord of Life, thy glory sharing,
Thou my place art even now preparing,
Where I'll dwell with Thee for evermore.

King of heaven ! Almighty Lord and Saviour !
Infinite Creator ! by whose hand
Circling worlds innumerable are spanned ;
Overwhelmed, o'er dazzled by thy favour,
This poor mortal brain begins to waver,
And with eyes averted I must stand.

Cherubim draw near with veiled faces,
When He speaks "the counsel of his will,"
And in speechless awe before Him kneel ;
But my trembling heart He gently raises,
And, for judgment, all the tender graces
Of his love and mercy o'er me steal.

Say, descending did He hover round me?
Ah! I know not. Lost in glad amaze
In the ocean of his cloudless rays,
While his arms divine, embracing, wound me,
I could see alone the love that crowned me,
Fix on Him a deep and steadfast gaze;

Laid my hand within his hand confiding,
And my wearied head upon his breast:
Not a wish disturbed the perfect rest.
From the world in his pavilion hiding,
Comfort I have found, and joys abiding,
Joys like those which blossom for the blest.

I, a shepherdess, on God's high throne,
Who the mighty mystery explores!
To the heaven of heavens a maiden soars,
That in one light she may dwell alone
With Jehovah's pure and perfect Son,
Whom the subject universe adores.

SELF-CONTEMPLATION.

Chap. i. 5.

"I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."



COMING from the royal chamber,
As the Monarch's chosen bride,
In the mirror timid gazing,
I a wonder have espied.

Black I find my hands, my features,
Black as sable-pinioned night;
'Tis my glorious Sun, my Monarch,
Thus hath scorched me with his light.

All my willing, all my longing,
All that I would seek or choose,
In this flood of heavenly sunbeams,
Purity and colour lose.

All my working, every action,
With a hand unclean was done;
And as black I see the pathway
That my erring feet have gone.

O ye daughters of my mother,
Black I stand within your view,
Yet the chosen of the Monarch!
This is true, most surely true.

Yet most fair and lovely, shining
In my bridal robing bright,
That in all my glorious beauty
He, the Bridegroom, may delight.

Through the raging heat of battle,
And with woe and tears untold,
He has won my bridal raiment,
White as snow, and pure as gold.

'Tis the garment of salvation,
And its folds my blackness hide;
Thus arrayed, I shine resplendent,
As befits a royal bride.

In myself, still black remaining,
I am naked, poor, and mean;
But, since mercy thus enfolds me,
Glorious, rich, and mighty seen.

Black indeed I am by nature,
White, by heavenly love adorned:
He bestowed on me my whiteness,
When my blackness first I mourned.

Blackness meets his condemnation,
For the robe of God is light;
Since myself I cannot alter,
He must make his chosen white.

In my blackness every evening
Sin's defiling power I prove;
White He washes me each morning,
In his patient, ceaseless love.

When my blackness I acknowledge,
Then I please my heavenly Friend;
When I feel most low and worthless,
Then his richest gifts descend;

And the darker self appeareth,
All the brighter Thou dost shine ;
For the righteousness that decks me,
Lord, eternally is thine !

O ye daughters of my mother,
Of my blackness ye may sing :
Yet behold me, pure and comely,
Bride of the Eternal King !



LOOKING UPWARD IN TIME OF
DROUGHT.*Chap. i. 6.*

“Look not upon me, because I am black; for the sun hath thus scorched me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.”



H, look not thus with scornful glances,
Daughters of Zion, on my sin;
I see, with feelings deep and mournful,
The want and poverty within.
Mistake it not; let me not be forsaken,
Because the Lord hath taken
The gift, unmerited and free,
That once his love bestowed on me.

My Heavenly Lord still holds me dear,
Though glad enjoyment of his grace
Has ceased awhile my heart to cheer,
That in myself you nought may trace,
Save evil, sin, infirmity, and woe;
For He would prove me so,
And teach me trust in Him,
When all is dark and dim.

No, no; I have not left his side,
Firmly I cling to my Beloved;
Think not, because the glow has died,
My glorious Sun is far removed:
No! As my upturned face His splendour sought,
The scorching rays it caught;
Swarthy and black I grew,
Worthless in my own view.

The children of my mother blame me,
My darkened countenance despise,
And in the rank of sinners name me,
Grown mean and wretched in their eyes.
Look up to God, and gaze not thus on me;
He will, most certainly,
From sin and evil lave me,
In his own time will save me.

While yet in glory, joy, and power,
Among my sisters I was seen,
They leaned on me, from hour to hour,
With docile hearts, and reverent mien;
And as their guardian gladly owned me,
Exulting crowned me;
All eager then to share
My gifts and graces rare.

The blossoms of their faith to cherish,
 With aid and counsel, love and care,
Lest in their vineyards aught should perish,
 My zeal was busy everywhere.
I brought them help and comfort, strength and light :
 One thing neglected quite—
 On my own garden-ground
 I let the weeds abound.

And now the Lord would make me know,
 In nature's power, in nature's will,
I am too weak, too poor and low,
 This vineyard of my own to till.
All He has taken—strength, and glow, and beauty,
 That I, with loyal duty,
 Henceforth in everything
 The praise to Him may bring.



DESPAIR AND LAMENTATION.

Chap. i. 7.

“Tell me, Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou pasturest, where Thou makest thy flock to rest at noon : that I may not be compelled to wander up and down with the flocks of thy companions.”



THOU, my soul's celestial love,
Dear Lord ! bewildered see me rove ;
I know not where to find Thee.

I held Thee, clasped Thee as my own,
And now I've lost Thee : Thou hast flown,
And left me here behind Thee.
My eyes, o'erwearied, search in vain,
Thy face is hidden from my view ;
O Lord ! at morning I complain,
And mingle tears with evening dew.

Oh say, where have I turned aside ?
Thy frightened sheep has wandered wide :
Here must I wholly perish ?
O Shepherd ! say where Thou dost feed,
Where Thou thy thirsty flock dost lead,
'Mid cooling shades to cherish.

From sultry noontide's burning sun
Vainly I seek a place of rest ;
Oh, call me, Lord, that I may run
With joy to thy forgiving breast.

My heart has loveless grown, and drear,
Thirsty and worn with anxious fear :
E'en hope within me dies.
My piteous cries ascend unheard ;
I seek for comfort in thy Word,
And only doubts arise.
Yes, e'en thy shepherds' voices sweet
No solace yield my misery :
Say, what will guide my wandering feet,
And lead me home to peace and Thee ?

The means I know are gladly sought ;
I talk with those thy blood has bought,
My faith with theirs to wreathe ;
And yet, forsaken still I stand,
No longer trace thy guiding hand,
Nor feel thy Spirit breathe.
My praises once with theirs could blend ;
Now, Zion's songs no echoes find ;
And when their prayers to heaven ascend,
My cold petitions stay behind.

Oh, why so far? 'Tis e'en as though
I had no Shepherd here below,
And of thy fold was not.
My brethren, doubtful, turn from me,
Half fearing that I now in Thee
Have neither part nor lot ;
And even I, so blest before,
Begin to question thy return.
Wilt Thou forget for evermore?
And must I vainly wait and mourn?



THE VOICE OF THE LORD.

Chap. i. 8.

“If thou know not thyself, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.”



DOOR wandering lambkin of my fold,
Now let thy sorrow be controlled !

What wilt thou then ? and wherefore
crying ?

Thou moan'st that love no more is felt,
No more its power thy heart can melt,
And yet, for me, art ceaseless sighing.

What is it troubles thee so sore ?
For if, indeed, thou lov'st no more,
Why should thy heart with suffering break ?
Rouse up—awake !

Know thyself ! Can thy faith remove ?
O thou, my friend, my gentle dove,
Exalted as my chosen bride ;

Thou, whom my gifts so richly dressed,
By these Almighty arms caressed,
And dearer far than all beside ;
Hast thou forgot ? Then look at me :
My love endures eternally ;
My faithfulness has changeless worth ;
Arise ! go forth !

Forth from the fears that grieve thee so,
Forth from thy self-created woe !

This searching in thyself must cease.
Out from thy selfish cares and pains,
Into the Word—*my* Word remains :

On feelings build not thus thy peace.
Wast thou not mean and low before,
When feasting on love's boundless store ?
Hear what thy tender Shepherd saith.

Go out in faith ;

Go out into my pastures fair :
The footprints of my flock are there,
The flock which evermore I guide.
There thou wilt hear the self-same cry,
And wailings over herbage dry ;
Yet ask, if ever one has died,

Through cross and woe to win the crown ;
And if a feeble sufferer moan,
My help, unfailing, still is near :
Go, pasture there !

Go, pasture there ! in safety dwell ;
Cherish thy faith's fair blossoms well ;
There food shall richly be supplied,
Love shall her ancient flame renew,
Hope flourish under sun and dew.
In peaceful quiet there abide ;
Forget thyself and all below,
Obey my voice, arise and go,
And with my flock contented range.
I never change !



CONSOLATION.

Chap. i. 12.

“As the King turned Himself toward me, my spikenard gave forth its fragrance.”

HEART ! break forth in loudest praises,
Now the sun night's curtain raises,
Rising with unclouded glow ;
Since the King to me hath wended,
All my bitter grief is ended ;
Rapture swallows up my woe,
Sweet perfume round Him flows.
The spices, as He goes,
The garden fill.
My Love ! my Lord !
Creative Word !
Thy presence has the fragrance stirred.

Long I lay in anxious pining,
Hope and comfort fast declining,
For my lost One still I wailed ;
Though I knew my sins forgiven,
He was gone who makes my heaven ;
Day had dawned, but sunshine failed.
He came, but silently,
And laid his hand on me,
His loving hand ;
That hand which brings
All goodly things :
In Thee, O Lord, are all my springs.

Salvation, blessing, joy, and light,
Vigour, and energy, and might,
A glance from Thee has power to give.
As shine the dewdrops on the grass,
When morning sunbeams o'er them pass,
And flowers in fragrant beauty live,
So, when Thou drawest near,
A perfume sweet and rare
My timid blooms disclose ;
And when thy light
Dispels the night,
Their heads are raised to meet thy sight.

Sing—Hosanna to my Sun !
Heart ! break forth ; in rapture run ;
 Laud Him in a song of praise !
Lord, for words I vainly seek,
And my voice is all too weak,
 Stammering thanks I feebly raise :
 Break forth, break forth, my heart !
 Healer of every smart
 Is He, the King !
 Lord Christ ! thy name,
 With glad acclaim,
I sing, eternally the same.



ALL IN HIM.

Chap. i. 13.

“ My Friend is to me a bundle [bunch] of myrrh, that lies all night
upon my breast.”



OW, in the wounds for me He bore,
I find a peace ne'er felt before ;
Now first, I know that He is mine,
In love that never will decline ;
That his affection cannot range,
Though all things fail and change.

He is my Friend, on Him I rest,
Nought, nought shall drive me from his breast ;
And though far off He *seem* to stand,
I know Him evermore at hand :
By day and night, in griefs and woes,
The balm of Gilead flows.

When sleep my senses did embrace,
And all in vain I sought his face;
When I had deemed Him vanished quite,
And loud bewailed my starless night,
His presence stilled my faithless fear,
Invisibly, was near.

Yes, veiled He waited at my side,
Through every care and grief to guide;
In every sad and dreary hour,
To shield my weakness with his power:
He leaves me not, He stays with me,
Mine for eternity.

Yes, now my soul has all in One,
The light for evermore—my Sun,
Life's fountain springing in my heart,
A balm to heal its every smart:
Salvation's rock no waves can shake,
Though thousands o'er it break.

My Friend is vivifying health,
Is richest comfort, rarest wealth;
My heart within me burns, I seek
A thousand names his worth to speak;
Whate'er we fair and lovely call,
My Friend is all, is all.

I cling to Him with arms of love,
No changes can avail to move;
Deep in my heart I grave his name,
Withholding nothing from his claim;
I wear Him on this faithful breast,
My costliest gem and best.

If in my heart his presence dwell,
I dare the powers of death and hell;
Tempests may rage, and lightnings play,
The Lord and I are one for aye :
My Shield, Salvation, Light, and Guide,
I'll never leave thy side.



A DIALOGUE.

Chap. i. 15, 16.

"Behold, thou art fair, my friend, behold thou art fair: thou hast doves' eyes!"

"Behold, my Friend, Thou art beautiful and lovely."



RISE, and shine in all thy beauty,

Come, my fair one, come to me !

On thy form I gaze enraptured,

Not a spot I find in thee :

No hypocrisy or falsehood

Dims the radiance of thine eyes,

Dove-like eyes, intensely gazing

Toward the voice which bids thee rise.

Dwell not thus upon *my* beauty,

O my Love, my heavenly Friend,

'Tis thy glowing beams reflected,

Which thy bride such radiance lend.

Thou alone art fair and glorious,

And thine eyes' most tender grace,

Since my heart their sweetness melted,

Are but mirrored in my face.

THE ROSE OF SHARON.

Chap. ii. 1.

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley."



METHINKS am like a tender flower,
Like a flower deep hidden in the vale,
'Mid the grass, in thick-leaved woodland
bower :

His keen eye has sought the blossom frail.
In the sunshine of those eyes resplendent,
Tended by affection fond and true,
Every bloom but proves his love transcendent,
All I have and am—to Him is due.

Ah ! without Him I had wholly perished ;
Not a ray relieved my dreary gloom ;
By the sunbeams I had ne'er been cherished,
Dew had never wept me into bloom.
Yet, as in a foreign country pining,
Exile yearnings troubled every dream,
And the home I never knew, was shining
Through my slumbers with a radiant gleam.

When I saw Him, gazed on Him admiring,
Then my resurrection morning broke,
Heavenly zephyrs o'er me breathed inspiring,
And a new and blessed life awoke.
In a vision, I beheld ascending,
First a stem, and then a fragrant flower,
Feeble in itself, and earthward bending,
Yet upheld by more than earthly power.

All that then I gazed upon in spirit,
When his hand renewing touched me first,
He has given me richly to inherit ;
His own plant with fostering care has nursed,
Nursed with zeal and vigilance unfailing,
When the germ, with inward vigour rife,
'Mid surrounding thorns was timid quailing,
Lest those thorns should choke its infant life.

From the rough and blustering wind He shaded,
'Neath a shelter cool at noontide kept ;
When the blight and dust of sin invaded,
From my leaves the subtle poison swept,
Watered me with kindly dews from heaven,
Guarded me in every dangerous hour ;
By his sunny smile the clouds were riven,
When in threatening gloom they seemed to lour.

One thing only frightens still and grieves me ;
He has left me on the valley's ground,
Where his herds are pasturing He leaves me,
Where the footprints of his flocks abound.
Oh, how shrinking terror trembles through me,
When I see the threatening danger nigh,
Lest with trampling tread they may undo me ;
Bruised beneath it I should fade and die.

Yet on Him my eye shall still be fixéd,
Not on perils amid which I stand ;
I will trust my Friend with faith unmixéd,
Trust my Gardener's ever careful hand.
As a flower, I see myself reflected :
But its fragrance and its radiant glow ;
What I have, am, shall be when perfected,
All, yes, all to Him alone I owe.



THE SONG OF THE BRIDEGROOM.

Chap. ii. 2.

"As a rose among thorns, so is my friend among the daughters."



THOU, whom for myself I trained,
Trained for my joy and pride,
To Sharon's rose I liken thee,
O sister, dearest bride !

The rose, escaped from shrouding green,
The blushing, budding rose,
That, 'mid the cruel thorns around,
In balmy fragrance glows.

* * * * *

For sunshine in thy darkness
I saw thee inly pine,
With joy I watched thy striving,
O bride and sister mine !

Yet, yet I feigned to leave thee,
Thy longing to deny,
I called for clouds to lour,
And overspread thy sky.

Not till the time appointed
Might'st thou thy leaves unfold ;
I only checked thy blossom,
More perfectly to mould.

I saw thee feebly tremble,
Thy drooping head sink down ;
All blooming power had left thee,
Forsaken and alone.

Yet never more could wither
That new and heavenly life,
Which to thyself unconsciously
Was still within thee rife,

Which silently, invisibly,
Was mighty to prepare
Colour, proportion, fragrance,
In every petal fair ;

Which, under sufferings manifold
Thou couldst not fathom then,
Has torn away each piercing thorn
Which met my searching ken.

When came the hour appointed,
And when my hand to thee
Sent, from the clouds divided,
The beam thou longed to see,

Then, then, thy bands were loosened,
And, as a conqueror glad,
Thou left'st behind thy darkness,
Thy darkness lone and sad.

And though from thorns upspringing,
Why, therefore, shouldst thou grieve?
Thy queenly head o'erlooks them,
In vain they round thee weave.

Yes, vainly they conspire
Thy loveliness to hide,
Thy quiet grace, my royal rose,
O sister, dearest bride !

THE ANSWER OF THE BRIDE.

Chap. ii. 3.

“As an apple tree among the wild trees, so is my Friend among the sons. I sit under His shadow, which I desire, and His fruit is sweet to my palate.”



SEEK an emblem token,

O heavenly Love, for Thee.

Yet ah, what mirror gives unbroken,

Through type and image feebly spoken,

A glimpse of what Thou art to me?

In sultry noontide hour,

By burning thirst opprest,

Sudden up-blossomed verdant bowers,

A fruit tree offered, 'mid the flowers,

Refreshing shelter, food, and rest.

Beneath its shade reclining,

Upon its fruit I feast.

O'er heated deserts fiercely shining,

For such a shelter vainly pining,

My weary searching never ceased.

With all its branches bending,
Down to my mossy bed ;
Those bounteous branches, in descending,
The worn and thirsty one befriending,
Delicious fruit abundant shed.

How sweet, yet never cloying,
The fruit He gives his own !
When thus celestial food enjoying,
Self melts away, and cares annoying ;
I live in Him, in Him alone.

Here let me, ever lying,
My Tree of Life, 'neath Thee,
List to thy branches' gentle sighing,
On dreamful ears melodious dying,
Lulled into calm eternally.

For, all that I desired
Most richly is fulfilled ;
Each hope to which my soul aspired,
Each wish that e'er my bosom fired,
Thou in thyself, dear Lord, hast stilled.

THE EXHORTATION OF THE LORD.

Chap. ii. 7.

“I conjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, or by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my friend, till *she* please.”



SION ! Sion ! I conjure thee,
All thy daughters I entreat,
That my fair one none should waken,
Rousing with a zeal mistaken,
From her slumber soft and sweet.

Wake her not from dreams celestial,
In whose world entranced she lies :
In her bridal beauty sleeping,
Let her, blest seclusion keeping,
Linger till she choose to rise.



THE RE-AWAKENING BRIDE.

Chap. ii. 8, 9.

“It is the voice of my Friend! Behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My Friend is like a roe or a young hart: behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, shewing Himself through the lattice.”



HAT voice upon the air is ringing?

Was it my Friend addressing me?

I know not what those tones are bringing,
Which to my heart their way are winging,
And follow them but dreamily.

It is thy tones, my Love, that thrill me.

My Life, my Joy, that strain renew!

My picture-visions cease to still me;

Thy words with gentle trembling fill me:

Oh, tell me, Lord, what I must do.

He comes! He comes! once more appearing,

His precious form enchants my sight;

The dream-mist from mine eyes is clearing,

Each mountain gleams in sunshine cheering,

And all the hills are robed in light.

As the young roe, with footsteps bounding,
Speeds o'er the plain, so comes my Friend;
The swift gazelle, the winds resounding,
Fly not as He, whose love surrounding
Bids fear in blest re-union end.

Oh, come, my Friend ! Thou find'st me waking,
My Life, my Treasure ever new.
My trembling heart, its dreams forsaking,
In deepest awe is answer making,
"What wouldst Thou, Lord, that I should do ?"



THE AROUSING CALL.

Chap. ii. 10.

“My Friend answers, and says to me, Arise, my friend, my beautiful one, and come hither.”



AN I have heard his words aright?

Is that the answer of my Love?

He calls me out into the night,

And bids me from his chamber move.

Though knocking at the door He stands,

No further are his footsteps heard:

“Rouse up, and rise!” are his commands;

“Come hither!” is his greeting word.

I slept so fast, I dreamed so well,

His peace reposing in my breast;

His call rang like a warning bell,

And roused me from delicious rest:

Borne by those glorious dreams away

Already to my Heavenly Home,

Most gladly I had slept for aye,

And now He says, “Arise, and come!”

Ah, Love, within thy chamber leave me;
What have I with the world to do?
Its cares and wiles will vex and grieve me,
Perchance their ancient power renew.
Thou hadst to win this wayward heart,
Which long withstood thy gracious will;
Now, from thy rest I cannot part,
Let me enjoy it, and be still.

“Come hither!” were the words He said;
“Arouse thee from thy bed of sleep!
Why is obedience thus delayed?”
Shall I refuse his word to keep?
One thing alone I surely know,
My Friend, I love Thee, heart and soul!
Thou bid’st me come; behold me now!
I own, dear Lord, thy blest control.



SPRING-TIME.

Chap. ii. 11-13.

"Behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers have come forth in the land; the spring is come, and the turtle-dove is heard in our land; the fig tree has buds (knots), the vines put forth grapes (have won eyes) and give their scent. Arise, my friend! come, my fair one, come hither."



LIFT up thine eyes, and cast them o'er the
land;
In deathlike sleep thou deemed it buried
still;

Ah! see the leaves, the buds, the joyous rill
Spring forth, set free from winter's icy band!
For as that glorious resurrection morning
Seemed to thyself, so now thou view'st the world,
Robed in my light. The veil of mist is furled
Which hid my working. See its power adorning!

Oh, look around! The whole wide land is mine:
My own heart's blood I gave the prize to gain.
Say, couldst thou think that I had died in vain,
And to another would the rule resign?

The land is mine ; my hand is o'er it spread,
Guarding by night and day ; and they, whose eyes
My Spirit opens, see, with glad surprise,
Countless, eternal blessings o'er it shed.

As Spring's delicious breeze, with promise rife,
Warms, fructifies, the bare and dreary fields,
And stormy winter to her influence yields,
Thus, thus my breath has roused the world to life.
As 'mid the dawning brightness of the year,
Ere myriad warblers in the woods rejoice,
The turtle-dove lifts up her gentle voice,
So through my kingdom, dovelike tones I hear.

The voice melodious well is known to thee :
When thou wast once a prey to doubt and care,
That Dove of Heaven I sent, my peace to bear,
A harbinger of hope and joy to be.
Her flight around, amidst us, ne'er shall cease,
The palm-branch and the olive-leaf she brings ;
To struggling, wave-worn souls her way she
wings,
And bears a message from the land of peace.

Oh, time of hope ! While thus her warblings ring,
The sap is mounting, quickening every bough ;
The earth, her youth renewing, welcomes now
The fragile children given her by the Spring.
Far from the noisy world, the busy scene,
Shine, deep amid secluded forest dells,
The timid lilies' fragrance-breathing bells ;
Each budding leaf unfolds its festal green.

Look forth ! behold the growing beauty shine !
Ripens the grape, the fig swells on the tree,
Sweet perfume, song of bird, and hum of bee,
Rejoice the land : and this wide land is mine.
Arise ! arise ! oh, waste not thus the hours !
Thou art my bride, and all I have is thine !
No longer, then, in idle rest recline ;
Come, view the land, this heritage of ours.



PUT ON THY BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS.

Chap. ii. 14.

“My dove in the holes of the rock, in the clefts of the stone, shew me thy form, let me hear thy voice; for thy voice is sweet, and thy form lovely.”



THOU hast seen, with looks delighted,
The working of my hand,
Hast felt my Spirit wafting
Renewing o'er the land :
Up then, my dove, my gentle one !
Arise ! delay no more !
Grey dawn to gold is kindling,
Thy slumbers should be o'er.

Lift up thy voice with gladness,
In word and deed break forth !
The fulness of my grace proclaim
Throughout the wondering earth !
Thou, whom I decked so richly,
Thou, whom these arms caressed,
Now show forth thy adorning,
And tell how thou wert blest !

Forsake these dreamy musings,
That fervid heart control,
Nor to love's early transports
Thus idly yield thy soul.
Go out to meet the sunshine,
Forth from thy home proceed,
Lift up thy voice in accents clear,
Shine forth in word and deed !

Oh, let not terror seize thee,
Lest foes should bar thy way !
True, thou art but a timid dove,
And weaker far than they ;
But thou 'rt *my* dove, my gentle one,
'Tis thine *my* strength to claim ;
Thou 'lt safely reach the haven :
Fly onward in my name.

I hide thee, O my chosen,
Within myself—the Rock !
All weapons formed against thee
Glance blunted from the shock.
None, none shall ever tear thee
From out my victor hand ;
Then let thy voice re-echo
Far o'er the listening land.

And where a tired pilgrim
Can find nor peace nor rest;
And where a heart is trembling,
By heavy sins opprest;
Where'er an eye grows tearful,
With fear and contrite pain,
Oh, lure all these into my net,
For such I love to gain !

For gentle are thy accents,
And lovely is thy form ;
Thou many a heart may'st win me,
And loveless spirits warm.
That many a fettered one may rise,
From cruel bondage free,
Fly thou, rejoicing, through the land,
With songs of victory !

Up then, my dove, my gentle one !
Arise ! delay no more !
O thou on whom the King bestows
His rich celestial store !
From low estate I raised thee,
To share my glorious throne :
Rise ! sing thy Bridegroom's praises !
Break forth, my chosen one !

MY BELOVED IS MINE, AND I AM HIS.

Chap. ii. 16.

“My Friend is mine, and I am His; He feedeth among the lilies.”



WHY beat'st thou, heart! tumultuously and
loud?

Alas! the more his words I comprehend,
Trembling, in conscious feebleness I bend,
And anxious fears upon my spirit crowd.

Forth I must go; He speaks a clear command;
My feet, once wandering, others now must guide;
By this weak arm the foe must be defied,
A simple maid, the haughty world withstand.

Spare me, Belovéd, spare; thy claim resign;
Yet no, ah no! I speak thus foolishly,
Because myself, and not Thy power, I see:
Be still, O heart, be strong; my Friend is mine!

My Friend is mine : what more couldst thou desire?
 I fight for Him, it is his work I share ;
 He is my strength ; He gives the arms I bear,
 My sword, my buckler, all my wants require.

And I am His ! Heart, cling in faithful love,
 And let Him lead me, wheresoe'er He will,
 With Him to work, or suffer, or be still,
 With Him to rest, and at his word remove.

My Friend is mine, and I am His for ever,
 He gives Himself, and takes me for his own ;
 He *will* not, and I *cannot*, live alone,
 Oh, blissful union, nought avails to sever !



THE PETITION OF THE BRIDE.

Chap. ii. 17.

“When the day becomes cool, and yields to the shadows, return, my Friend, like the gazelle, or like a young hart, upon the mountains of separation.”



Y Friend is mine! At this inspiring word,
My spirit's deepest, holiest springs are
stirred.

Whether I lean, by heavenly joy o'ercome,
On his dear breast, my heart's eternal home;
Or at his call my happy dreamings end,
For Him to work, his cherished vineyard tend,
Ready I stand, I follow at his word,
Thy bride, Belovéd, and thy maid, my Lord.

One only boon from thy true heart I seek:
Thou knowest well how poor I am, and weak;
Gladly I'll bear the burden of the day,
Working beneath the sultry noontide ray;
But when, o'er all the parched and weary fields,
The setting sun to evening shadows yields,
Come then, and cool me, as with heavenly dew;
My fainting spirit, blesséd Lord, renew.

The shepherd, when the weary day is o'er,
Turns joyfully to seek his humble door;
Lord, as Thou wilt, myself I wholly yield,
To live, to love, to suffer in thy field;
But when the twilight calmly deepens round,
Oh, let me hear thy footstep's welcome sound;
My dwelling with thy presence blest rejoice,
Turn then to greet me with thy loving voice.



THE ANXIOUS SEARCH.


Chap. iii. 1-4.

“By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth : I sought, but I found Him not.

“I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets and in the lanes.I sought, but I found Him not.

“The watchmen who go about the city found me.....Have ye not seen Him whom my soul loveth ?

“It was but a little that I passed from them, when I found Him whom my soul loveth.”

N the fair garden of my Love, beneath
o'erarching green,
Refreshed by fruits celestial, sleep stole
on me unseen ;

A gentle voice aroused me. Starting, I raised my
head ;

Loudly I called upon my Love ; I sought Him :
He had fled !

Oh, how my soul grew fearful ! all drowsiness was
gone,

As my eye for Him sought vainly, who rules my
heart alone ;

How quickly from my couch I sprang, and cried
in anxious pain,

“In every place I’ll seek Him, till I find Him
once again!”

“Yes! long and loudly will I call; my voice shall
not be still,

‘Till I”—presumptuous spirit! how durst thou say,
“I will”?

As if this fitful will of thine, thy glances weak and
dim,

Could ever call Him back again—could reach to
gaze on Him!

As if ’twere not the freest grace when He Himself
reveals,

When his extended sceptre his bride rejoicing
feels!

Through all the lanes I hastened, I sought in fear
and pain,

But Him my soul so deeply loves, I could not find
again.

My grief waxed ever greater, as up and down I
passed,
My eyes were full of anxious tears, my heart beat
loud and fast ;
The watchmen found me seeking ; I lingered to
inquire,
“ Have you found my Friend, I pray you ? have
you seen my heart’s desire ? ”

Alas ! for human comfort, for human aid I sought,
As if the watchman knew His way, or could divine
His thought ;
As if the highest mortal could ever have revealed
How we may find Him once again, when from our
sight concealed !

Sadly I turned my weary feet, my heart o’erfilled
with woe :
All confidence in self had fled, all faith in aught
below ;
When, just as I most deeply felt my feebleness
and shame,
His arms were thrown around me, and I heard
Him breathe my name !

Yes, then I found my Blesséd One! 'twas then
that He explained
Wherefore, by hiding thus his face, my troubled
breast He pained:
Not for sweet caresses only, his union with my
soul,
And not for love-sick yearnings his hand had
made me whole.

Not for the peace and joy bestowed, should tender
love be given,
But for the Giver's self alone, who makes the joy
of heaven:
Because, without Him I should stray—should soon
be lost and gone;
That I might know and feel it all, He left me thus
alone.

At first, a time of soothing calm He grants his
chosen bride,
Yet, only that for future strife fresh strength may
be supplied;
For conflict with the cruel foe without her and
within,
Faithful to death 'gainst him who strives both
heart and realm to win.

This was the lesson He would teach. I comprehend it now;
With joy I yield myself, beneath his easy yoke to bow;
And though, while working here for Him, some weary hours remain,
All grief in this *one* joy is lost,—I've found my Love again!



YEARNING OVER OTHERS.

Chap. iii. 4.

"I hold (cling to) Him, and will not leave Him till I bring Him into my mother's house, into my mother's chamber."



ORD, my Shepherd, Fount of Blessing,
 Past our guessing !
 All thy thoughts to usward soar ;
 For the grace which Thou hast shown me,
 I will own Thee,
 Praising Thee for evermore.

Now, imploring, I would grasp Thee,
 Nor unclasp Thee
 Till by faith I overcome ;
 Leading Thee, by prayer prevailing,
 Never failing,
 To my mother's dreary home.

I forgot the sorrow-laden
 (Selfish maiden),
 Sought Him for myself alone,

Till He said, "Remember others :
 See thy mother's
Children, still to peace unknown.

"My salvation they are needing ;
 Interceding
For their souls I shed my blood ;
Yet, poor sheep, the Shepherd fearing,
 Never nearing,
They despise the highest good."

Not in vain thy words appealing :
 Deepest feeling
Fills anew this chilly heart ;
Henceforth, captives to deliver,
 Chains to sever,
Ever, ever be my part.

Yes, from me my brothers, knowing
 Of the flowing
Fountain that can cleanse from sin,
To that stream shall turn adoring,
 Till restoring
Grace shall give them peace within ;

Till, beneath the hand of healing,
 Meekly kneeling,
At the cross my loved ones bow,
Sin and self for Thee forsaking,
 Love awaking,
Teaching all their hearts to glow.

Here my yearning prayers shall centre,
 Till Thou enter,
Lord, my mother's dreary home.
Even unto death I'll grasp Thee,
 Nor unclasp Thee
Till by faith I overcome.



SEEK MEEKNESS.

Chap. iv. 7, 8.

“Thou art all fair, my friend; there is no spot in thee. Come, my bride, from Lebanon, come from Lebanon, come (go) down: come hither from the heights of Amana, from the heights of Shenir and Hermon, from the dwellings of lions, from the mountains of leopards.”



YES! thou art lovely to thy Bridegroom's
view,

No spot upon thy beauty: more and
more,

Favour and grace from me thy soul bedew,
As weak thou seemest to thyself, and poor.

Come, royal Bride! Oh, come, my chosen friend,
From Lebanon, from every height of pride!
Still downward, downward must thy path descend:
Let not thy heart regain the mountain side.

The myrrh-clad hill of incense thou may'st find;
There thou art safe: 'mid still, sequestered glades,
Its pathways through the vale of meekness wind,
My grace o'erarching them, like cooling shades.

But fly ambition's mountains, chill and bare,
 Frowning and flowerless, where the wild winds
 moan;

Far o'er the land those haughty peaks uprear,
 Their barren bleakness to themselves unknown.

Fly, fly from vain desire for earth's applause,
 A roving lion, ever seeking prey;
Unsatisfied, still opening hungry jaws,
 It drives thee from my sanctuary away.

Descend! descend! I in the vale will shield thee,
 O royal Bride, my ever new delight!
From Lebanon to my protection yield thee,
 The gentle dove loves not the lofty height.

Not there am I: I roam o'er dewy lands;
 I seek my bride where forest flowerets bend;
Obey my words; come, follow my commands,
 And ever, ever shalt thou find thy Friend.



THE GARDEN OF THE LORD.

Chap. iv. 12-15.

“My sister, dear bride! Thou art a locked garden, a sealed spring, a sealed source (or stream).

“Thy plants are like a pleasure garden of pomegranates, with excellent fruits; cypresses and spikenards; spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of wood for incense; myrrhs and aloes, with all best spices.

“As a garden fountain, as a spring of living waters, which flow from Lebanon.”



THOU art the garden, fashioned for my
praise,

The royal garden, full of blessings
sealed.

Behind the walls, what beauty is revealed,
Beauty on which no stranger eyes may gaze!
Without, no glory seen!

Flower-filled within, and rich with fragrant balm:
And 'mid the holy calm
I roam, unnumbered charms to glean.

Thou art the well in the dry desert land,
The spring whose waters never-failing flow,
Hidden, unknown to earthly hearts below,
And never drawn by any stranger hand.
When glares the scorching sun,
The thirsty wanderer seeks a stream to quaff,
Leans wearied on his staff,
Nor dreams how near the waters run.

Yes! Thou art sealed, art consecrate to me :
Both spring and garden, lofty walls defend,
That undisturbed my flowerets I may tend,
Secure from curious eyes may walk in thee.
Within shall enter never
Aught that can devastate or harm,
Thy shield, my holy arm ;
Myself thy Wall, thy Tower for ever.

Thou yieldest bloom and fruit for me alone,
Those fruits delicious, clustering on the bough :
Down drops the myrrh ; a thousand perfumes flow
From myriad blossoms, blending into one.
All that revives the heart,
Rich cooling nectar, colouring rare,
As rainbow-tinting fair,
Ne'er from their cherished home depart.

And still, the blossom season to renew,
Waters the spring eternally the meads ;
From Lebanon the holy fount proceeds,
Life-giving, freshening as with heavenly dew.
O garden of delight !

To me, thy Gardener, me alone,
Thy endless charms are known,
Hidden and sealed from worldlings' sight.



THE RESPONSE.

Chap. iv. 17.

“Let my Friend come into his garden, and eat his excellent fruits.”



Oh come, my Friend, if I thy garden be,
Oh come, and wander evermore through
me ;

Thou art my light, my dew, the air I breathe ;
For Thee let fragrance flow, and blossoms wreathe.

Let every pulse which throbs within my frame
Beat with accordant praises to thy name ;
May every thought fly homeward still to Thee,
As heaven-sent flowers look sunward yearningly.

Fill me so richly with thy grace divine,
That fruit abundant on my boughs may shine ;
May no dry twigs be found among my trees,
Nor winter's icy breath my blossoms freeze.

Oh come, my Friend, if I thy garden be,
Oh come, and wander evermore through me :
Come, enter in ; enjoy, Thou noble Guest,
What Thou thyself hast planted, reared, and blest.

PLEASANT FRUITS.

Chap. v. 1.

“I come into my garden, my sister, dear bride : I gather my myrrh with my spices ; I eat my honeycomb with my honey ; I am drinking my wine with my milk : eat, my beloved ones, and drink, my friends, and become satisfied (drunken).”



OW could the garden lose the loving care
Of Him who first adorned it for his own !
O sister, dearest bride, mine eye rests there ;
Thither it turns, unceasing and alone.

Thy heart my garden, there I gathered still ;
Yes, even when thou thought'st me far away.
Prayers are the spices which that garden fill,
Contrition's myrrh-like perfumes round me play.

I feast upon my honey : rich and sweet
Are all thy works from the new life that rise ;
Thy heart redeemed, with holy love replete,
New wine, pure milk, in freshening draughts
supplies.

Not for myself alone the gathering hand ;
 For as my all to man's whole race was given,
 So now wide open shall my garden stand,
 Its fruits as free for all as love and heaven.

All which in secret I prepared and trained,
 With lock and wall defending ; perfect now,
 As the ripe fruit from bending branches rained,
 I offer as a gift to all below.

In leafy bowers, secure from earth's annoy,
 Full many a meek-eyed floweret bloomed for me ;
 The blossom every soul may now enjoy,
 Although the bud was cherished hiddenly.



OPEN UNTO ME.

Chap. v. 2.

“Open to me, dear friend, my sister, my gentle one; for my head is full of dew, and my locks with the hoar frost of the night.”



PEN to me! my love, my friend,
Though in dark night to thee I wend:
My dove no idle rest may take.

Hard was the labour of the day,
Cheerless and rough has been my way:
Canst thou for me no welcome make?
Despised, unheeded, proudly scorned,
Through the wide land I've walked and mourned;
On every side I stretch my hands,
Not one to greet me ready stands.

Open! My wounds anew are bleeding,
Because so vain my earnest pleading:
The world denies, rejects her God.
No charm nor comeliness I own;
My crown of thorns, my tortured groan,
My form so marred beneath the rod,

All scare them from their suffering Lord,
Though echoes still my peace-fraught word ;
Unheard, to those I've ceaseless cried,
For whom in agony I died.

Open ! Whoever hears my voice,
Who makes the Son of God his choice,
Receives the world's contempt and hate ;
His former wealth he counts but dross,
Sore from the scourge, bent 'neath the cross,
The follower shares his Master's fate.
Though at my word the heavens are furled,
My kingdom is not of this world ;
He who my royal name would bear,
Must learn the menial's garb to wear.

Yet to the chosen one, my bride,
I 'm ever welcome—at her side,
Yes, even in my crown of thorns !
For her those piercing thorns I bear ;
Her endless joys I thus prepare :
Richly that crown my brow adorns.
Throw wide thy door ! Despised and scorned,
Through all the land I've walked and mourned ;
Oh, linger not ; come, greet thy Friend !
Here let my weary wanderings end.

SHRINKING FROM THE CROSS.

Chap. v. 3.

“I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on again ? I have washed my feet ; how (wherefore) should I soil them again ?”



LORD, 'tis Thou ! Thou seeking entrance
here !

Can I open, since I did not lock ?

Heaven and earth obey Thee, every sphere

Moves submissive : wherefore shouldst Thou
knock ?

Wherefore, Lord, thy glory thus disguising ?

Why not in thy festal robes return ?

That the hearts without, from earth uprising,

Toward a higher loveliness may yearn.

From thy sufferings grace and power were shed,

Which this wondering soul redeemed and kept,

When in sackcloth, and with ashes spread,

Long and sadly at thy feet I wept.

Sin's defiling garment flung aside,
 Never more, I thought, to wear again :
 When earth's dust upon my feet I've spied,
 Carefully I cleanse them from the stain.

Shall I now, my sanctuary leaving,
 As a sinner to the world appear ?
 They will look with scornful eyes, or grieving,
 At the black and spotted garb I wear.

Thou, yes, Thou, need'st not to flee from shame,
 Thou remainest ever what Thou art ;
 But my pathway cannot be the same,
 Mine, who learned so late from sin to part.

Soiled will be my robe 'mid guilt and error,
 If I follow Thee upon thy way :
 Will not all my sisters shrink in terror,
 When they view thy bride in such array ?

I will follow Thee from land to land,
 Even in suffering thy will adore ;
 But it cannot, Lord, be thy command,
 That to mockery I should ope my door.

Foremost in thy battles I will be ;
But why must I wear a beggar's dress ?
Wherefore dost Thou sink in poverty
Her whom once 'twas thy delight to bless ?



CONTRITION.

Chap. v. 6-8.

"I arose to open the door to my Friend : my hands dropped myrrh, and myrrh trickled over my fingers on the handle (bolt) of the lock.

"But when I had opened the door to my Friend, He had vanished, and was gone. Then my soul went forth according to his word. I sought Him, but I found Him not ; I called, but He answered me not.

"The watchmen found me. They struck and wounded me. The watchmen on the walls took from me my veil."



AS a beggar now I wander, yet complaint becomes me not ;

Rather—quiet resignation : He appoints my lonely lot.

But believe I cannot, will not, that my Friend would leave me ever :

Where He loves, his love is changeless ; what He wins, He loses never.

When, with silent love reproachful, forth He
 stretched his piercé hand,
From the soothing dream I started, breaking from
 its silken band.
Lofty words by pride dictated—to repentance
 yielded place,
And in bitterness of spirit I arose to seek his face.

Are there bolts and bars between us? Oh, what
 indolence hath cost !
What a harvest of communion, blighted by insidious
 frost !
Well might myrrh-drops of contrition from my
 trembling fingers fall,
As the fast-locked door I opened, answering at
 length his call.

His dear name with tears I uttered, faltering with
 a bitter cry;
But the sighing breeze of evening coldly whispered
 in reply.
Through the cheerless, frowning shadows, frightened
 glances vainly sought,
Till, from terror's shock reviving, on his words
 again I thought.

Then my cherished home I quitted, in obedience
to his will,
Knocked at every door, a beggar, his command-
ments to fulfil ;
In the streets, the lanes, the markets, still I sought
my vanished Friend :
Yearning for his smile, I sought Him to the city's
farthest end.

Shame and scorn pursue my footsteps ; words
contemptuous I brave ;
E'en the watchmen, when they met me, blows
and cruel mockery gave :
For the foes without the city good defence their
steel supplies,
But the tempted soul within it they have failed to
recognize.

Ah ! in spite of prayers and pleadings, they have
torn away my veil ;
As a fallen one insulted, on I go with sobbing
wail.
Oh, to think I am a stranger in the city of my
Friend !
Not a single heart to lean on, not one mind to
comprehend.

When without the walls I sought Him, still his
form was hid from view,
Once again, within inquiring, they have wounded
me anew :
All my soul is bare and empty, barren as the desert
sands,
While with flickering hope I follow, seeking Him
through trackless lands.

As a beggar now I wander, yet complaint becomes
me not ;
Rather—quiet resignation : He appoints my lonely
lot.
But believe I cannot, will not, that my Friend
would leave me ever :
Where He loves, his love is changeless ; what He
wins, He loses never.



THE ANXIOUS INQUIRY.

Chap. v. 8, 9.

"I conjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Friend, tell Him that I am sick for love.

"What is thy Friend among other friends, O thou most beautiful of women? What is thy Friend above other friends, that thou thus conjurest us?"

SHULAMITE.



DAUGHTERS of Zion, whom my fervent
yearning

Far in the weary desert found;
Whose hearts, my own through sympathy discerning,
With answering grief and love abound;
Oh, by these tears conjuring you, I pray,
Be watchful! Easily the heart may stray.

And since with Him ye hold communion cheering,
And have not lost and wounded Him like me,
When next within his presence blest appearing,
Let me, oh, let me in remembrance be!
Tell Him, I pray you, all my heart's desire;
Say, that for Him I ceaselessly enquire.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

Pour out thy heart ! speak on, thou heavy-laden !

Not yet, O sister, can we go.

Of thorny ways thou tell'st us, royal maiden ;

Yet glad, sweet thoughts within us glow.

We know that those whom God will honour most,

Before He crowns, He humbles in the dust.

Thy restless grief, the heavy loss thou provest,

Show us how rich thou wast before :

Who is this Friend whom with such depth thou
lovest ?

And what to thee ? Oh ! tell us more,

That for his favour we, like thee, may yearn,

At once his mercy, and our guilt discern.



“MY FRIEND IS WHITE AND RED.”

Chap. v. 10.

“My Friend is white and red, chosen among (out of) many thousands.”



MIDST ten thousand you would know my
Friend ;
Never by any heart forgot,
On which his heavenly smiles descend,
Though poor, weak words describe Him not.
Yet this one thing, O sisters, must be said,
My Friend, my Friend, is white and red.

White is my Friend : before his brightness loses
Her crystal smile the summer morn.
My Friend is red ; the very thorns bring roses
His kingly brow with scarlet to adorn.
Upon his red and white entranced I gaze,
Drowned in contrition, filled with praise.

My Friend is white ; the broken law securing,
He showed it in the life He led :
Obedient even unto death, enduring
Death on the Cross ; my Friend is red.
Red is my Friend ; his blood was shed for me :
White ! Mine through Him the victory.

Nor red nor white I see, my Saviour viewing,
But red *and* white for evermore !
My sore and wounded heart his red bedewing,
His white for battle gives me power.
Death, Satan, Sin, may thunder at my head,
My Friend, my Friend, is white and red.



“CHOSEN IN HIM AND PRECIOUS.”

Chap. vi. 7, 8.

“There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number.

“But my gentle one, my dove is but one: one is the dearest of her mother, the chosen of her mother. The daughters, when they saw her, blessed her; the queens and concubines praised her.”



AS the great billows of the mighty sea,
Dashing and foaming, round each coun-
try move,

Thus all-embracing, rolls eternally

Heaven's glorious ocean, every wavelet love.

I call to every nation day and night,

Till in responsive love their souls unite;

Until the long lost wanderers sigh for light,

And warm them on their Saviour's breast above.

My Father gave me many a precious soul;

Yet more He promised, whom I now command;

Tended and fed, they thrive 'neath my control,

And none shall ever tear them from my hand.

Wild children of the farthest zones behold,
Crowding to seek the shelter of my fold ;
Love wins the day, though lures of earthly mould
Would tempt them backward to the tyrant's land.

Like stately queens, who crown and sceptre claim,
The many churches of my name I view,
Each tall and comely, as a high-born dame :
Admiring nations yield them reverence due.
'Tis for the glory of my name they rise ;
I am their Lord, they my eternal prize ;
On these, my queens, I fix indulgent eyes,
With mild forbearance and affection true.

Nor these alone my favouring smiles rejoice,
A crowd of handmaids in my courts abound ;
Mine are they all, all maidens of my choice,
On me their faith, their hope, their love they
found.

As lowly cots by mansions though they be,
Not one can e'er be overlooked by me ;
The Monarch's eyes regard them graciously,
Because his presence-chamber they surround.

And farther yet, of souls a countless throng,
 Who raise toward heaven their anxious, yearning
 eyes,
Peaceless and joyless, for redemption long,
 Nor know their Saviour's love awakes their sighs.
The virgin souls, who in the waste up-bloom,
And sunward press, through fogs of doubt and
 gloom;
All I will gather, for there yet is room;
 Yes, all shall learn my name to recognize.

Many are dear : one only, wholly mine,
 From all eternity one only bride;
The one in whose supernal beauty shine
 The grace and glory of all souls beside,
The one who lies for ever on my heart,
The one who in my victories hath part,
 The one in whom for ever I delight,
 Perfect and faultless in her Bridegroom's sight.

And when this loveliest chosen one they view,
 All Zion's daughters sing in chorus sweet;
The queens, the handmaids, yield her praise anew,
 And humbly cast their crowns before her feet.

No earth-born envy mars their heavenly joy,
“One Lord,” they cry, “one home, one blest em-
ploy;

Through her are gathered many lost before :
One Shepherd and one fold for evermore.”

O Shulamite, my only bride be thou!

Mirror my love before the darkened earth,
So shalt thou win me countless souls below ;
Through thee they shall be taught to know my
worth.

The heavenly host, my chosen, praise thy name,
Jehovah’s love for me and thee the same ;

For thee thanksgivings through my kingdom thrill :
Walk in my presence till I all fulfil.



BEHOLD THE BRIDE.

Chap. vi. 9.

“Who is she that breaks forth like the dawn, fair as the moon, clear
(chosen) as the sun, and terrible as the vanguard of an army?”



BEHOLD the Bride ! she, herald-like,
precedes
The royal sun, arrayed in dazzling light,
As mild Aurora smiles away the night,
While all in dewy stillness shine the meads.

Behold the Bride! fair as the moon out-gleaming,
Melting dim shadows of the midnight skies;
His grace, through her reflected, meets our eyes,
The light which she receives, o'er others beaming.

Behold the Bride! a terror to her foes;
As the vanguard of long embattled hosts,
The power of heaven's Eternal King she boasts:
Renown to win, and glory, forth she goes.

THE SERVICE OF LOVE.

Chap. vi. 10, 11.

“ I went down into the fruit-garden to see the shrubs by the brook ; to see if the vine blossomed (throve), and if the pomegranates were flourishing (putting forth leaves).

“ My soul knew not that He had set me on the chariots of his noble people.”



USINGLY I wandered, wandered,
By the brooklet prattling low,
Murmuring through the royal garden,
’Mongst its thirsty flowers to flow.
Joyous sunbeams round me dancing,
With a songful heart I roamed,
Toward the bright pomegranates glancing,
Watching o’er their growth advancing,
Seeing if the vines had bloomed.

Richest growth and glad aspiring,
Here I found in shrub and tree ;
Shoot and blossom upward striving,
All in fairy rivalry.

Joying in the garden's brightness,
On the fragrant flowers I gazed;
Viewed their softly-pencilled lightness,
While the blossoms' snowy whiteness
Filled me with delight amazed.

Down amid the rushes stooping,
From the crystal stream I fed
Many a flower that, hot and thirsty,
Hung its weary little head.
In my work more earnest growing,
As the sun more fiercely shone;
On the farthest plants bestowing
Water from the brooklet flowing,
Eagerly I laboured on.

Thus engaged, no thought of profit,
Or advantage, stirred my breast;
Well I knew He loved his garden:
For Him working I was blest.
With a calm and happy feeling,
Ever on my task intent,
Seeds the rarest flowerets yielding
Next I sowed, and then to shielding
Tender plants my thoughts I bent;

Little dreaming that a greater
Victory I for Him might claim,
By my quiet peaceful working,
Than in battles for his name.
For endurance, power indwelling,
This, the armour He provides;
And when victor songs are swelling,
Who in *love* is found excelling,
On his car of triumph rides.



THINGS NEW AND OLD.

Chap. vii. 14.

“The love-apples (mandrakes) give forth fragrance, and before our door are all manner of precious fruits.

“The new and the old, my Friend, I keep (lay up) for Thee.”



IFE renewed and love reviving,
Vigour new for ancient striving,
New fruit on the boughs of old,
To my Friend behold me bringing;
Since my soul, anew up-winged,
Doth the ancient realm behold.

Love her early glow assuming,
Spring's delicious blossoms blooming,
Garlanding the youthful year,
Blend with summer's golden blessing,
Which, the ripening sun confessing,
From the verdant branches peer.

With the juicy fruits combining,
Flowers on every side are shining;
 In Eternal Spring they live:
To my Friend, in love confiding,
Old and new alike providing,
 Ever varying joy I give.

Life renewed and love reviving,
Vigour new for ancient striving,
 New fruit on the boughs of old,
To my Friend behold me bringing;
Since my soul, anew up-winged,
 Doth the ancient realm behold.



ETERNAL LOVE.

Chap. viii. 6, 7.

“Love is strong as death; jealousy, firm (hard) as hell. Its glow is fiery, a flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, he would meet with only scorn and contempt.”



RISE, O Zion ! God's eternal choice !
Adore the power of love with joyful voice.
Mighty as death itself the flame divine,
Deeper than hell ; and unexhausted glowing,
Though all the floods of earth were o'er it flowing,
That flame unquenchably would shine.

Rejoice, O world ! Jehovah's flag of might,
Eternal love, waves high before thy sight ;
Fury and hatred, vanquished, yield their place :
God's bleeding Lamb, upon the altar lying,
Redeems thy sons, 'neath Satan's fetters sighing :
What love is this ! what wondrous grace !

Rejoice, O world ! thy sin vast ocean fails
To quench the flame of love ; that flame prevails ;
Thy bold defiant pride, thy hatred sore,
Brighten its triumph, but shall conquer never.
Who scorn such love will doom themselves for ever,
The awful judgment-seat before.

Love is our shield, our buckler, and our tower ;
Battle may rage, and storm may round us lour :
Hell's utmost force with this defence we brave.
Like lofty walls, the haughty ocean standing
On either side, rolls upward when, commanding,
His hand is stretched athwart the tossing wave.

As a free gift this Love Divine we gain,
To earn or purchase it we seek in vain ;
If one should offer all he boasts below,
The hoards of youth and age together heaping,
This love would ne'er be trusted to his keeping.
God gives it : empty he would go.

Oh, tell us not of treasures here on earth,
Of wealth and wisdom, fame, and honour's worth :
The loved of Jesus higher aims become ;
The restless worldling's pleasures he despises :
His watchword—love for Love, the pilgrim rises,
Higher and higher, toward his heavenly home.

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